

JAN 06 1993

Subj: Comments - Rockaway River Sediment Ecological Assessment -  
- L.E. Carpenter and Co. Site -

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Technical & Pre-remedial Support Section

To: Jon Josephs, RPM ✓  
NJSB2N

The river sediment ecological assessment is a generally acceptable document, although it is somewhat haphazardly organized. It has a significant number of errors in the tabulation of data and in some of its sweeping conclusion-drawing statements. Specific comments follow.

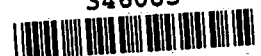
1) page 2-1 to 2-2: the supplementary guidance series to RAGS Volume II, the "Eco Updates", is not listed among those documents used in performing this eco. assessment. It appears that the contractor is not up to speed in the area of ecological assessment guidance, as two of the 'Updates' have been published over a year ago.

2) page 2-6, 2nd ¶: 'Wet 'mounts' of periphyton samples . . . '

3) page 3-10, 3rd ¶: there are numerous errors here at this critical point of the document where summarization statements of the study's findings are being made. The statements contradict the tabulated data on the following page, i.e., Table 5. In the 2nd and 3rd sentences, discussing the abundance of 'filterers', the statistics cited for this group are those of the 'collectors', found in the row above the 'filterers' in that table! Did the document mean 'collectors' where it said 'filterers'? Is every statement in the ¶ referring to a one-row shifted set of numbers? As an example, the ¶'s 3rd sentence concerning 'gatherers' sports statistics that are found on the 'filterers' line of Table 5. With such a high level of error in the reporting of results, my assessment of the adequacy of study is doubtful at best. That the contractor's quality control procedures (assuming there is such a thing) did not identify these errors, is troubling for me. This and other ¶'s must be redone to perfectly relate to the information on the various tables they are addressing.

4) page 3-10, last ¶: as in the previous comment, there are numerous errors of the text providing information that differs from that shown in Table 5. As an example, the last two sentences discussing 'scrapers', is actually discussing 'gatherers', as per Table 5.

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5) page 3-12: as in the previous two ¶'s, this page abounds in mistakes, as it fails to correctly transcribe data from Table 6 - unless, of course, the data in Table 6 is wrong!!

a) 1st ¶, 3rd line: ' . . at a single location ranged from 21 at location 2 to 35 . . .';

b) 1st ¶, next-to-last sentence: there were 25 taxa at location 6, not 26;

c) 2nd ¶, next-to-last sentence: in place of the 5.28 HBI 'highest' index value, the 5.43 value from location 3 should have been used;

d) ¶'s 1, 2, and 4: unless I'm mistaken, the 'greater than' sign should be replaced throughout with the 'less than' sign. As an example, in the first ¶, location 4 with 25 taxa has a greater water quality than location 2 with 21 taxa, for the document tells us that water quality increases with the number of taxa. The rank order of the locations in the ¶'s last sentence doesn't say this at all; it says that location 2 has a greater water quality than location 4. Every rank order of locations has a misused 'greater than' sign.

6) page 3-14:

a) as per comment 5d, I believe there is an incorrect usage of the 'greater than' sign in ¶'s 1 and 2;

b) 4th ¶: another careless error (this time in transcribing information from Table 8) that questions the competency of the group putting this report together - 'filterer/scraper ratio' should be 'scraper/filterer ratio'. Also, filterer is misspelled

7) page 3-17: another error-ridden page -

a) 1st ¶: the sum of the taxonomic groups is 26, not 27 as stated;

b) 3rd ¶: Gammarus sp. was not numerically abundant at location 3!;

c) 4th ¶, 2nd sentence: here we go again; re-write as ' Of the 27 taxa collected (or is it 26; see comment 7a), 12 were present at only one location, 5 were present at 2 locations, 3 at . . .';

d) last ¶, 2nd sentence: once again there is no match-up of text and table (#10); in next-to-last sentence, ' . . at all locations where they represented from 1 to 10 . . .'

8) page 3-20, 2nd ¶: problem again, I think, with 'greater than' sign

9) Table 12:

- a) 'filamentous';
- b) in legend, 'Rare'

10) page 4-1, 5th ¶: the Table used as a support for this should be given; if it's Table 5, the statement doesn't follow from it.

11) page 4-1, 7th ¶: the ¶ does not specify what the codominant of the gatherers was.

12) page 4-1, 8th ¶: On what table is this statement predicated?

13) page 4-3, 1st ¶: sentence beginning with 'Energy input' is a run-on; I don't follow the point it's making.

14) page 4-3: this page has numerous grammatical errors which time does not permit me to identify.

- a) last ¶, 2nd sentence: 'At locations 2 and 3, . . .'

- b) last ¶, 2nd sentence: I assumed Table 5 was used for the basis of this statement. If I'm correct, perhaps 'Chironomidae' should be substituted for 'Cheumatopsyche', which does not appear in that table

15) page 4-4: another disastrous page . .

- a) 1st ¶: 'It is likely that the velocity was (i.e., delete 'at'); in next-to-last sentence, it should be 'collectors' that again dominated at location 6.

16) page 4-4, next-to-last ¶: last sentence is unintelligible to me.

17) page 4-5, 1st ¶: I interpret this to mean that this study had no matched reference location to the downstream sample locations. While on this, in the last sentence, location 2 is said to be a downstream location. It is not so; it ~~mat~~ downstream of location 1, but on page 2-2, next-to-last ¶, and elsewhere in the document, it is an upstream location!

cc: V. Pitruzzello, PSB  
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